



# U.S. Embassy Santiago Newsletter

## News for American Citizens in Chile

Volume 4, Issue 4

October-December 2008

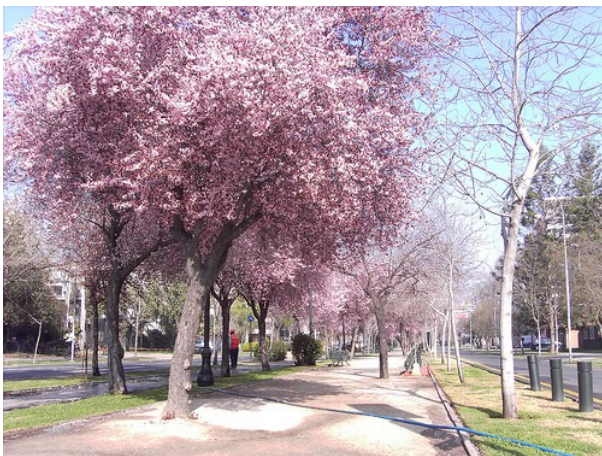


### THE SPRING EDITION

#### New Consul Arrives



The consular section is happy to introduce our new Consul, Mr. William (Bill) Whitaker. Bill, a career Foreign Service Officer, arrived in Chile in August. Before joining the Foreign Service in 2002, Bill worked as a lawyer in Alaska specializing in civil trials and appeals. His prior assignments include Mexico City and Bern, Switzerland. Bill and his wife Sylvia (who was born and raised in Chile) have four school-aged children. Please join us in giving Bill a warm welcome to the U.S. Embassy in Santiago.



Spring arrives in Santiago

#### Overseas Voting Update

Do you want to vote in the 2008 presidential election? If so, you must **act immediately** to ensure you are registered in time. Your best source for step-by-step instructions on how to register is the Federal Voting Assistance Program website, [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov). The basic steps are below, but each state has slightly different rules, so please visit the website to ensure that you properly complete the registration form. If you register and request a ballot in a timely manner but do not receive a ballot in time to vote, you may complete a federal write-in absentee ballot to vote in Federal Elections only. The Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot is also available on [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov).



#### The Absentee Voting Process

**Step 1:** Complete and mail the Federal Post Card Application Form (SF-76), Registration and Absentee Ballot Request Form, available online at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov).

**Step 2:** Local Election Official in the U.S. approves your registration request or requests further information

**Step 3:** Local Election Official in the U.S. mails your absentee ballot.

**Step 4:** You vote and mail the absentee ballot to the Local Election Official in time to meet state deadlines.

In order to receive an absentee ballot in a timely manner, it is necessary for citizens to keep their local election official informed of address changes. Please contact [VoteSantiago@state.gov](mailto:VoteSantiago@state.gov) with any additional questions on how to register, request a ballot, or vote.

## Meet your ACS Team



The members of the American Citizens Services (ACS) team in the Embassy are here to serve you. Many of us have contributed features for this spring edition of the newsletter. We'd like to hear from you. Write to: [SantiagoAmcit@state.gov](mailto:SantiagoAmcit@state.gov).

---

## Authorization for Minors to Travel

*By Roxana Pacheco*

In Chile, all children younger than 18 years of age are required to have parental authorization to leave the country. This authorization must be given by both parents in writing, and signed before a Chilean notary public if the child is traveling alone or with one parent. Authorizations are valid for 90 days only, unless stated otherwise. This requirement applies to all foreigners as well as Chileans. Chilean immigration officers are increasingly enforcing this requirement. When traveling with a minor child in Chile on a tourist visa, having such documentation on hand will facilitate entry and departure.



**Spring in the vineyards**

If the minor travels with both parents, the parents must bring a *libreta familiar* or the child's original birth certificate to demonstrate their relationship to the child. This document must be submitted to the International Police for inspection upon departure through immigration.

In cases where one of the parents has died, the surviving parent must present the death certificate to

the International Police.

### **What happens if one of the parents cannot be located, or refuses a child's authorization to leave the country in an arbitrary way?**

The mother or father affected by this situation should request an authorization from the Family Court with jurisdiction over the child's domicile.

The mother or father can present the legal request, with or without legal assistance, by submitting the following documents:

- The child's birth certificate
- The requesting parent's national I.D.
- The marriage certificate, if applicable
- Justification which includes all the reasons supporting the interest of the child
- Round trip ticket, if available, which reflects the duration and destination of the trip.

The time to process the request and authorization depends on each specific case. However, the law stipulates two sessions. The first session, called the preparation, informs the court of the situation. The second session is the hearing where a decision is rendered. If the parent who refused the authorization is not present at the hearings, the judge can decide in favor of the requester.

In the event that the child has been placed in the custody of one parent or to a third party, the authorization will be granted to the person who has the legal custody of the child. However, if one of the parents have visitation rights, the parent with visitation rights would also have to approve the authorization for the child to leave the country. In the case of adopted children, the authorization must be completed by the adoptive parents.



**Spring time in Chile**

## Country Specific Information Report – Chile



The State Department recently published the [Country Specific Information \(CSI\) Report](#) on Chile. The report offers valuable information on new entry/exit requirements, medical facilities and health information, and traffic safety & road conditions in Chile.

Take a moment to read this report and share it with your friends or colleagues traveling in Chile.  
[http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1088.html#map](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1088.html#map)



Service); **Federal Jobs** (men born after December 31, 1959 must be registered to be eligible for jobs in the Executive Branch of the Federal government and the U.S. Postal Service). Several states (<http://www.sss.gov/fsstateleg.htm>) have added additional penalties for those who fail to register.



Nonimmigrant aliens in the U.S. on student, visitor, tourist, or diplomatic visas, men on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, cadets and midshipmen in the Service Academies and certain other U.S. military colleges are not required to register with Selective Service.

The easiest and fastest way to register with Selective Service is to register [on-line](https://www.sss.gov/RegVer/wfRegistration.aspx) at <https://www.sss.gov/RegVer/wfRegistration.aspx>. You can also register by mail using a Selective Service "mail-back" registration form available at the Embassy. When you fill it out, sign/date, and drop it off at the Embassy, we will mail it for you. Alternatively, you may affix postage and mail it directly to the Selective Service address available on the [Selective Service website](#).

The Selective Service System website [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov) (FAQs) indicates that the Social Security Number (SSN) is not required to register. However, experience shows that a SSN will be eventually requested. If you don't have a SSN, we recommend that you submit an application as soon as possible through <http://www.ssa.gov>. In the meantime, leave the space for your SSN blank and provide it to the Selective Service when you obtain one.



Spring in San Pedro de Atacama

## Men, You Can Do This!

By Natasha Presson

This is a reminder to all male **U.S. citizens and male legal permanent residents age 18 through 25**, that they are required by law to register with the Selective Service System. Men who do not register could be prosecuted and, if convicted, fined up to \$250,000 and/or serve up to five years in prison.

Men who fail to register with Selective Service before turning age 26, even if not prosecuted, will become ineligible for **U.S. Citizenship** (if the man first arrived in the U.S. before his 26th birthday); **Student Financial Aid**; **Federal Job Training** (the *Job Training Partnership Act* offers programs that can train young men for jobs in auto mechanics and other skills and is only open to those men who register with Selective

Visit the [Selective Service System](#) ([www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov)) and find out more information about requirement to register, penalties for not registering, and other useful information.



## Child Citizenship Act

*By Gabriel Lathrop*

If you are a U.S. citizen, your child may be eligible to acquire U.S. citizenship despite the fact that he or she was born abroad. It is highly recommended that parents contact the Consular Section in the U.S. Embassy at [SantiagoAmcit@state.gov](mailto:SantiagoAmcit@state.gov), to get information to determine if your child will qualify for U.S. citizenship by filing for a Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA). In some cases, the Consular Officer determines that you are unable to transmit citizenship to your child because the U.S. citizen parent did not live in the U.S. for the minimum required time period. If that is the case, there are two other methods for your child to obtain U.S. citizenship.

### **Option 1: U.S. citizenship through immigration**

Nonetheless, your child may still become a U.S. citizen if you file an immigrant visa petition on behalf of your child and he or she enters the U.S. as a Legal Permanent Resident (LPR). This is because the Child Citizenship Act of 2000 allows certain foreign-born children to acquire citizenship automatically if the child meets the following requirements:

1. Has at least one U.S. citizen parent by birth or naturalization;
2. Is under 18 years of age;
3. Lives in the legal and physical custody of the U.S. citizen parent; and
4. Be admitted as an immigrant for LPR status. A child who has LPR status will have a permanent resident card, often referred to as a green card. Another way to show LPR status is the I-551 stamp in the child's passport. This stamp shows the child has entered the United States on an immigrant visa and/or has been admitted as a lawful permanent resident.

The effective date of the Child Citizenship Act is February 27, 2001. Children who met these requirements on that date automatically become U.S. citizens. Children who were 18 years of age or older on that date did not acquire American citizenship from the Act.

To get information on immigrant visas, please contact the Immigrant Visa Unit in Santiago at [santiagoimmigration@state.gov](mailto:santiagoimmigration@state.gov). If you are living in the U.S. you should contact the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

After your child has entered the U.S. as an LPR, he or she can obtain a U.S. passport by providing the following:

1. Proof of the child's relationship to the American citizen parent;
2. The child's foreign passport showing the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services in the Department of Homeland Security (USCIS) I-551 stamp in the passport, or the child's permanent resident card (green card);
3. Proof of identity of the U.S. citizen parent(s);
4. Passport application, passport photographs, and fees.

### **Option 2: U.S. citizenship through expeditious naturalization**

A U.S. citizen parent who did not transmit citizenship to the child by birth abroad can also apply for the expeditious naturalization of the child if certain conditions are met. The conditions include the U.S. citizen parent him/herself has a U.S. citizen parent (the child's grandparent) who has been physically present in the U.S. for a cumulative period totaling five years, including two years after age 14. It is important to note that the grandparent's physical presence in the U.S. will allow for the expeditious naturalization of a child after birth, but not for the transmission of citizenship at birth.

The parent(s) must prove their relationship to the child's grandparent and the grandparent's physical presence in the U.S.A. The grandparent does not need to file a petition or agree to sponsor the grandchild. This means of naturalization may be preferred when the child is residing and must continue to reside, outside the U.S.A. The child would travel to the U.S. on a non-immigrant (temporary) visa, complete the naturalization process, and return abroad to live.

Visit our website at <http://santiago.usembassy.gov> for more information on this topic.

## Passports by Mail

*By Nathan Tidwell*

Did you know that adults can renew their U.S. passport without making a trip to the Embassy? If you meet certain qualifications, you can mail your passport, application, photos, and fee receipt to the Embassy for processing. When your passport is ready, the Embassy will return it by courier for a nominal fee.

**You are eligible to use [Form DS-82](#)** (Application for Passport by Mail) if you meet the following conditions:

- You can submit your most recent passport book and/or U.S. passport card;
- You were at least age 16 years old when your most recent passport book and/or U.S. passport card was issued;
- Your most recent passport book and/or U.S. passport card was issued less than 15 years ago;
- You are using the same name as in your most recent passport book and/or U.S. passport card; or you have had your name changed by marriage or court order and can submit proper documentation to reflect your name changes.

Click on <http://santiago.usembassy.gov> for more information on how to take advantage of this process.



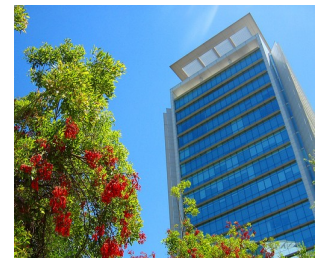
Spring in Parque Nacional Torres del Paine

## Community Resources

**The American Association of Chile:** a non-profit, non-political organization serving and uniting the citizens of the United States and their families, and striving to build strong bridges between members and the Chilean community ([www.aachile.org](http://www.aachile.org)).

**The American Chamber of Commerce Chile (AMCHAM Chile):** Promotes free trade and investment between Chile and the United States and serves as an effective voice for the membership while facilitating related services ([www.amchamchile.cl](http://www.amchamchile.cl)).

**The Association of Americans Resident Overseas (AARO):** Describes itself as a non-partisan, public-service organization dedicated to serving the interests of Americans abroad and has asked us to provide its contact details to the American community in Chile. The AARO's email address is [aaro@aaro.org](mailto:aaro@aaro.org) and its website is [www.aaro.org](http://www.aaro.org).



**Little League Chile:** Do you know a child who would like to play baseball? Would you like to get involved with youth baseball? Contact Mr. Jorge Varela at 09-437 2050 or email: [jlwarela@vtr.net](mailto:jlwarela@vtr.net).

### Spring in Santiago

**International Professional Women's Association (IPWA):** a not-for-profit organization of English-speaking women interested in professional, personal and cultural development. Activities include monthly meetings, dinner and cocktail parties. More information is available at: [www.ipwasantiago.org](http://www.ipwasantiago.org)

**English Language Religious Services in Santiago:** Details are available on the Embassy website [chile.usembassy.gov](http://chile.usembassy.gov) under the Frequently Asked Questions tab under American Citizens. (Schedules are subject to change. Please call to confirm.)

## American Citizen Service Unit – Hours and Contact Information

**Walk-In Hours:** M - F 08:30 – 11:30 a.m.

**Appointments:** Wed. 2:00 p.m.

The ACS Unit is closed the first Friday of the month for in-service training, but does provide emergency services.

**Address:** Av. Andrés Bello 2800,  
Las Condes, Santiago  
**Phone:** 56) (2) 330-3000  
**Fax:** (56) (2) 330-3005  
**E-mail:** [SantiagoAmcit@state.gov](mailto:SantiagoAmcit@state.gov)

Visit our website, [chile.usembassy.gov](http://chile.usembassy.gov), for detailed information and instructions for obtaining services and forms. The State Department website, [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov), has more information about travel to other countries and numerous other items of interest to Americans living or traveling abroad.



Spring in Antofagasta

## Upcoming Embassy Holidays

The Embassy is closed on U.S. and Chilean holidays. During in-service training days, we are available for emergencies only. The in-service days provide our staff with important training on rules and regulations, so that they can provide quality service to you, our customers. Thank you for your understanding!

October 3 – In-Service Training  
(Emergencies Only)

October 13 – Columbus Day

November 7 – In-Service Training  
(Emergencies Only)

November 11 – Veterans Day

November 27 – Thanksgiving Day

December 5 – In-Service Training  
(Emergencies Only)

December 8 – Immaculate Concepcion

December 25 – Christmas Day



*Mote con huesillos*, a favorite spring drink in Chile.